

From 1950 to 1960 there was an increase of 143,000 employed persons in the State of North Carolina. With an average of 3.5 persons per household, these jobs might be expected to support half a million additional people. What is not generally known is that from 1950 to 1960 there was actually a decrease in the number of employed men in the State. The entire gain, then, was due to entrance of women into the labor force. In Mount Holly, as in Gaston and Mecklenburg counties, there were slight increases in the number of employed men but much greater increases in jobs for women. In Gaston County, women made larger employment gains than men in such expanding industries as retail trade, finance, and professional services (teachers, nurses, etc.), while in declining industries women had smaller losses than men in agriculture and textile manufacturing. Table 3 shows the consistency of the trend toward increased labor force participation by white women, followed by nonwhite women, then white men, with significant decreases in nonwhite men.

Table 3 PERCENT CHANGE IN THE LABOR FORCE BY RACE AND SEX FOR GASTON AND MECKLENBURG COUNTIES AND NORTH CAROLINA, 1950-1960

Labor Force Category	<u>Gaston County</u>		<u>Mecklenburg County</u>		<u>North Carolina</u>	
	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite	White	Nonwhite
Males:						
Ages 14+	12.3%	0.2%	29.9%	17.2%	12.0%	0.3%
In Labor Force	8.3	-4.4	31.3	15.4	5.1	-13.0
Employed	9.7	-4.6	31.7	13.0	4.3	-14.8
Unemployed	-18.2	0.0	17.2	95.2	37.9	33.6
Females:						
Ages 14+	15.2	4.2	32.1	19.7	14.5	2.6
In Labor Force	20.9	12.0	41.3	34.3	43.8	18.0
Employed	19.8	12.3	40.4	31.3	41.7	16.2
Unemployed	39.5	7.7	71.2	113.9	102.6	37.8